तव कथामृतं तप्तजीवनम्
tava kathāmṛtaṁ tapta-jīvanam

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Highlights

• **"O Best of the Demons"**
His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

• **Friends from Another World**
Srila Bhaktissidhanta Saraswati Thakur Prabhupada

• **Rasikananda Prabhu's Visit to Govardhan**
Sri Gopijanavallabha Das

• **A Humble Appeal to the Master of Radha**
By the medieval poet Gaurasundar Das

• **The Real Meaning of Indra's words**
Srila Vishwanath Cakravati Thakur Commentary on* Śrīmad Bhāgavatam *10. 25.5-7

"O Best of the Demons"

His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

People are affectionate to their father and mother, and they hesitate to give up their company. Especially boys find it difficult to give up the company of family, father and mother, and take to Krishna consciousness. But here, in the *śāstra*, it is said that if a father or mother is a demon, or a friend is a demon, or a family member is a demon, they should not be accepted as a relative.

This even refers to a guru. If you have accepted somebody as your guru, but he's a demon, he should be rejected immediately. Just like in India there is a system of *jāta-gurus*, gurus by caste. They become guru by family tradition. One family is attached to another, a family of gurus, by hereditary rules. Sons after sons accepting guru from the other party. That kind of guru is not wanted.

This is called *laukika-guru*, a teacher who can guide one in ordinary dealings only. Sri Jiva Goswami has recommended that one should accept a paramathika guru, a teacher who can guide one to the ultimate goal. It is not just a formality. *Śāstra* says, "If the guru does not know the right thing, he can be given up." So what is the right thing? The right thing is to become a devotee. First of all, the *śāstric* injunction is that one who is not a devotee cannot become a guru. A guru must be a *vaiṣṇava*. The *Padma Purāṇa* states:

ṣaṭ-karma-nipuṇo vipro mantra-tantra-viśāradaḥ
avaiṣṇavo gurur na syād vaiṣṇavaḥ śva-paco guruḥ

> Even if a *brāhmaṇa* is very learned in Vedic scriptures and knows the six occupational duties of a *brāhmaṇa*, he cannot become a guru, or spiritual master, unless he is a devotee of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. However, if one is born in a family of dog-eaters but is a pure devotee of the Lord, he can become a spiritual master.

Paṭhana pāṭhana yajana yājana dāna-pratigraha: a *brāhmaṇa* must be a qualified scholar, *paṭhana*, and he must be able to make his disciples also learned, *pāṭhana*. A *brāhmaṇa* must worship the deity, *yajana*, and he should worship for others also, *yājana*. And *dāna-pratigraha*, he should accept charity from his disciples and others, and again distribute it. A *brāhmaṇa* is supposed to always remain a beggar. Even if he gets hundreds and thousands of rupees, he spends it for Krishna consciousness. That is the sign of a

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brāhmaṇa. So even such a *brāhmaṇa*, if he's not a *vaiṣṇava*, cannot become a guru.

However, even if a person is born in a low-grade family but has become a *vaiṣṇava*, he becomes guru. This is the injunction of the *śāstra*, and this is the order of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu: "You become a guru." Mahaprabhu does not say, "Because you are a *brāhmaṇa* or a *kṣatriya*, you become guru. No. "Every one of you become a guru." How? "Simply learn the science of Krishna and teach it; then you become guru." [*Cc. madhya* 7.128]

— Lecture on *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, in Mayapur, 21 February 1976.

Friends from Another World

Srila Bhaktissidhanta Saraswati Thakur Prabhupada

The servitors of Godhead will always look to our interest. In this material world, our friends sometimes like us and sometimes they turn against us. But in *sādhu-saṅga* there is an opportunity of hearing about our original home from the lips of persons who are quite familiar with the same. If we neglect the opportunity we shall repent in the long run. Their words will lift us and change our mentality. All sorts of puzzling questions will be solved if only we lend our ear to those persons who have very little to do with this world. Our situations in this world are liable to change like fogs and mists. As intelligent men, our prudent nature should manage sometimes to hear of the transcendental world, instead of being unaccountably diffident. An incredulous attitude will not give us the opportunity to hear of such things.

— From an undated conversation entitled, *"Correct Angle of Vision"*.

Rasikananda Prabhu's Visit to Govardhan

Sri Gopijanavallabha Das

Rasikananda Prabhu appeared in this world in Utkala (Orissa) in the year 1590 as the son of Sri Acyuta and his wife Bhavani. The devotees in the line of Shyamananda Prabhu consider Rasikananda to be an incarnation of Aniruddha, the expansion of Lord Vishnu. The following story adapted from the Bengali book Rasika-maṅgala *by Sri Gopijanavallabha Das, a prominent disciple of Srila Rasikananda Prabhu, describe the events that led up to Rasikananda's leaving Vraja to go to Orissa.*

Rasika started for Ayodhya via the forest route. From there he went to Vraja, first visiting Mathura and seeing the birthplace of Lord Krishna. From Mathura, he went to Vrindavan to see the deities of Madan Gopal and Govinda as well as the other temples and groves there. Seeing the banks of the Yamuna, he felt transcendental bliss, and stayed there a few days before touring the twelve forests where the Lord had performed his different pastimes. He visited all the forests, Bhadravan, Lohavan, Srivan, Bhandiravan, Mahavan, Talavan, Khadiravan, Bahulavan, Kumudavan, Kamyavan and Madhuvan. Seeing these places and remembering the pastimes of the Lord, he shed tears and forgot himself. On seeing Govardhan Hill, he fell unconscious. When he recovered, he went to see the deity of Gopal Ray installed there. He decided to spend the night at Govardhan. During his sleep, Krishna in the form of a cowherd boy appeared before Rasika, and told him:

śunaha rasika tumi āmāra vacana
śīghra kari yāo tumi utkala bhuvana

sarvajīve deha mora bhakti ānandite
mora vraja-vāsī yena seve śuddha cite

tomāra apekṣā kari mora śyāmānanda
mathurāya dekha giyā tāṅra pada-dvandva

"Listen to me, Rasika. You must quickly go to Utkala, Orissa. Distribute the ecstasy of devotion to me to all living entities, and see that the people of Utkala serve my favorite Vraja people. My Syamananda is waiting for you in Mathura. Go there and serve his feet." (2.2.30-32)

Hearing these words Rasika opened his eyes and saw that Krishna, dressed as a cowherd boy, was standing before him. Seeing his beauty, Rasika fainted, and when he regained consciousness, the Lord had gone. After this, he quickly visited all the places of Krishna's pastimes. Since his *darśana* of the Lord at Govardhan, Rasika constantly shed tears in love of Krishna, and emotion ruled over his body. He cried, "Oh, Lord of my life, where have you gone? How can I live without the son of Nanda Maharaja?" In this mood, all eight kinds of *bhāva* appeared in him. He forgot hunger and thirst, and remained absorbed in meditation on Krishna. After he took *darśana* of the Keshava deity at Mathura, he met with Syamananda. Rasika fell at the feet

of Syamananda, who took him in his arms and told him, "I have been waiting for you. It is good that you have visited Vridavan before coming here, but now you should return to your home."

Rasika replied, "Oh my lord, I want to stay in Vrindavan for a few more days so that I can see everything. Having reached Vrindavan, how can I leave here so quickly?"

Syamananda sweetly told him, "Your relatives are miserable without you there, and they will blame me. Please go, my dear, and don't create any trouble. We have both been ordered to go to Orissa to distribute love and devotion to all. You must sincerely render service to the devotees there. You have already seen Krishna at Govardhan, and at that time he ordered you to do so. How can you disobey his order?" Hearing this, Rasika was astonished, and thought to himself, "Syamananda must be an intimate devotee of Lord Krishna, otherwise how could he know everything that had happened? I have not told anyone of my seeing Krishna."

Rasika then told Syamananda, "I must obey your order."

Syamananda was very happy to hear this, and they started for Utkala together, going by the forest route to Nagpur and then to Segala. There they rested in the home of a fortunate person named Vishnu Das. He and his family took initiation from Syamananda, and he was renamed Rasamaya Das. From there they reached the home of Rasika, and all the inhabitants were happy to see them again. Syamananda had come with the son of Acyuta in order to remove the darkness of ignorance in Orissa.

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A Humble Appeal to the Master of Radha

By the medieval poet Gaurasundar Das

Gaurasundar Das was a Bengali Gaudiya Vaishnava poet who lived in the early part of the 18th century. He compiled the famous songbook named Kīrtanānanda, *which consists of 651 songs composed by 60 different poets. Gaurasundar Das wrote a similar song to the one below, in which every line also begins with the words,* "rādhā-nātha". *See Bindu number 102.*

(śrī-rāga)

rādhā-nātha dekhite lāgiche bhaya
tanu-bala hrāsa āra buddhi-nāśa kakhana ki jāni haya

O master of Radha, I am afraid to even look! My bodily strength is diminishing. My intelligence is destroyed. What do I know now?

rādhā-nātha sakali chāḍiyā gela
dānta ānta gela badhira ha-ila nayane nā dekhi bhāla

O master of Radha, everything has gone away! My teeth are gone. My digestion is gone. My hearing is bad. I do not see well.

rādhā-nātha tumi se karuṇā-sindhu
tomā vinā āra kebā uddhāribe tumi sakalera bandhu

O master of Radha, you are an ocean of mercy! But for you, who will deliver me? You are the friend of everyone.

rādhā-nātha āge saba nivedaya
maraṇasamaya vyādhi-grasta haya smaraṇa nāhika raya

O master of Radha, I have told you everything! Now I am in the grip of a fatal disease. I cannot remember anything.

rādhā-nātha āra kichu nāhi bhaya
vṛṣabhānu-sutā-caraṇa-sevane pāche kṛpā nāhi haya

O master of Radha, I am not afraid! Please be merciful and allow me to serve the feet of Vrishabhanu's daughter.

rādhā-nātha ei nivedayi āmi
vṛṣabhānu-sutā-pade dāsī kari aṅgīkāra kara tumi

O master of Radha, I place this prayer before you! Please accept me. Please make me a gopi maidservant at the feet of Vrishabhanu's daughter.

rādhā-nātha ei mora abhilāṣa
nibhṛta nikuñje nija pade leha e gaurasundara dāsa

O master of Radha, this is my desire! Please make this Gaurasundar Das into a gopi, a gopi that in a secluded forest grove has fallen in love with your feet.

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The Real Meaning Of Indra's words

Srila Vishwanath Cakravati Thakur
Commentary on* Śrīmad Bhāgavatam *10. 25.5-7

In the following commentary, Srila Vishwanath Chakravarti gives a second meaning to Indra's angry words.

vācālaṁ bāliśaṁ stabdham ajñaṁ paṇḍita-māninam
kṛṣṇaṁ martyam upāśritya gopā me cakrur apriyam

[Indra said:] These cowherd men have acted inimically toward me by taking shelter of this ordinary human being, Krishna, who thinks himself very wise but who is simply a foolish, arrogant, over-talkative child.

PURPORT: Indra said, "Krishna is over-talkative (*vācālam*), speaking many audacious arguments in the line of *karma-mīmāṁsā* and *sāṅkhya* philosophy even though he does not accept these arguments; thus he is foolish (*bāliśam)*. He is disrespectful (*stabdham)* because he speaks boldly even in the presence of his own father. Because he is ignorant (*ajñam*), all he can do is herd cows, but he thinks himself a learned man (*paṇḍita-māninam*). Although I am a demigod, they neglect me to honor him, a mere human being (*martyam*), and thus they offend me."

Through the insults of Indra, Goddess Saraswati is actually praising Krishna thus: By Krishna's mercy even a fool (*bāliśam*) becomes expert in speaking (*vācālam*) according to Vedic authority. "*Stabdham*" means that Krishna bows down to no one because there is no one for him to offer homage to. "*Ajñam*" means that there is nothing more for Krishna to know because he is omniscient, and *paṇḍita-māninam* means that Krishna is highly honored by the knowers of the Absolute Truth.

eṣāṁ śriyāvaliptānāṁ kṛṣṇenādhmāpitātmanām
dhunuta śrī-mada-stambhaṁ paśūn nayata saṅkṣayam

[To the clouds of destruction King Indra said:] The prosperity of these people has made them mad with pride, and their arrogance is backed up by Krishna. Now go and remove their pride and bring their animals to destruction.

PURPORT: Indra said, "Due to wealth these cowherd men are mad with pride and their minds have been influenced by Krishna. You should remove their pride and kill their cows."

The unintentional inner meaning of Indra's words is as follows: The cowherd men are anointed with sandalwood pulp (*śrīyā avaliptā*). Your clouds should remove (*dhunuta*) the heat in their bodies with cool rain and refresh the cows, making them tremble in delight. When Krishna lifts Govardhan, you should allow him to make a beautiful place (*saṅyak kṣayam*) to stay." The word *kṣayam* means residence as well as destruction.

ahaṁ cairāvataṁ nāgam āruhyānuvraje vrajam
marud-gaṇair mahā-vegair nanda-goṣṭha-jighāṁsayā

I will follow you to Vraja, riding on my elephant Airavata and taking with me the swift and powerful wind-gods to decimate the cowherd village of Nanda Maharaja.

PURPORT: Indra spoke to the frightened clouds, "I will also come behind you desiring to destroy (*jighāṁsayā)* the cowherd pastures of Nanda." The real meaning is "I am also coming, desiring to see the cowherd pastures of Nanda."

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